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The spread of socialistic  
doctrine in N.Y. City

[New York]

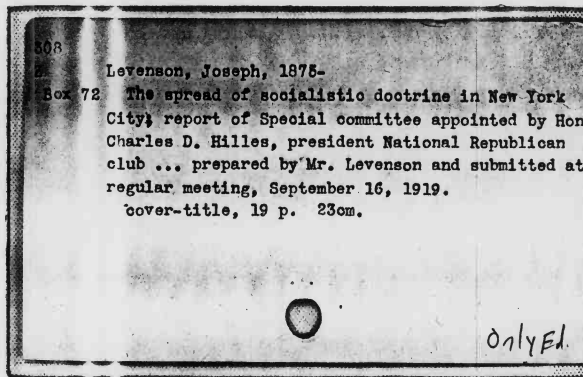
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# The Spread of Socialistic Doctrine in New York City

Report of  
Special Committee  
Appointed by  
HON. CHARLES D. HILLFS  
President National Republican Club

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Committee:  
JOSEPH LEVENSON, Chairman  
ELMER E. COOLEY  
CHARLES PARK

Prepared by Mr. Levenson and submitted at Regular Meeting,  
September 16, 1919

22 March, 1920 - C.R.W.

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the National Republican Club:

Your committee begs leave to submit the following unanimous report:

Socialism in this country as a political propaganda had its beginning in 1888 when the followers of the European Socialist movement named a candidate for President of the United States. The social and economic changes advocated by Socialist thinkers attracted quite a number of followers in the United States ever since the days they were first advanced by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and the other founders of political Socialism; but no effort was made to organize a political party, as was done in European countries until the campaign of 1888. Ever since that campaign the growth of the movement in the city of New York is practically the story of its growth throughout the country.

New York City has been the chief breeding place for the Socialist Party and its offshoots. A larger following has been attracted here than in any other community, and the work done in behalf of the cause has been largely financed from this city. Its leading thinkers and representatives have come from this city, and of the two members of Congress who have been elected as Socialists, one came from this city, the other from Milwaukee. Legislators, Aldermen and other minor officials have been elected occasionally in various sections of the country, and in 1917 New York City elected ten Members of Assembly to the State Legislature and seven Aldermen. While the election of 1918 brought about the defeat of most of these representatives, it was due entirely to the coalition effected by the Democratic and Republican parties in the districts which had elected these Socialists.

#### THE STORY IN FIGURES

The best idea of the growth of Socialism in this city is obtained from a review of the voting figures of each election

since 1888, when the Socialist Party throughout the country received about 7,000 votes:

1888—Vote cast for President .....	*1,772
Vote cast for Mayor .....	2,045
1890—Vote cast for Mayor .....	4,604
1891—Vote cast for Governor .....	5,190
1892—Vote cast for President .....	5,945

\*Old city of New York

The Socialist vote in New York State this year was 8,000, while throughout the country it was 31,552. The city vote amounted to 2.1% of the total vote cast. Peoples (Populists) Party received 21,532.

1893—Vote cast for Mayor. ....	7,975
1894—Vote cast for Governor .....	7,614
1895—Vote cast for Secretary of State .....	10,993
1896—Vote cast for President .....	10,059

This was the Bryan-McKinley year, and the total city vote was 3.4% of the total vote cast. There was no increase this year, but this campaign was conducted on radical lines and many Socialists voted for Bryan.

The above figures were for the old city, which included what are now New York and Bronx counties. Since 1897 the figures take in the Greater City of New York and show a constant growth in each borough of the Greater City:

1897—Vote cast for Mayor .....	14,310
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This was 2.7% of the total vote and shows a decline, due, however, to the intensity of the local campaign, in which the contest was waged between Low, Tracy and Van Wyck.

1898—Vote cast for Governor..	15,405 (3% of total)
1900—Vote cast for President..	16,024 (about as above)
1901—Vote cast for Mayor....	16,047 (about as above)
1902—Vote cast for Governor..	26,007 (4.7% of total)
1904—Vote cast for President..	29,686

The vote indicated since 1900 includes the total Socialist vote as during these years there were two party tickets, one

known as the Social-Democratic and the other as the Social-Labor Party. It is interesting to mention that in addition to these there were nearly 5,000 votes cast in 1904 for the People's party candidates which may be regarded as a movement akin to the Socialistic.

1905—Vote cast for Mayor .....	11,817
1906—Vote cast for Governor .....	13,477
1907—Vote cast for Court of Appeals .....	17,694

The vote during these three years shows a decline, but again the loss is due to a large number of the radically inclined voting for candidates they thought had a better chance of winning. In 1905 Mr. Hearst was a candidate for Mayor and in 1906 for Governor, while in 1907 the Independence League named candidates for the Court of Appeals.

1908—Vote cast for President .....	27,881 (Ind. League vote 27,372)
1909—Vote cast for Mayor...	13,018 (2% of total)

This vote shows a decline again, and Mr. Hearst's candidacy explains it.

1910—Vote cast for Governor .....	29,838 (5.2% of total)
1911—Vote cast for Local Offices....	34,133 (5.9% of total)
1912—Vote cast for President .....	34,885 (5.9% of total)

This was the memorable Roosevelt-Taft year and very many of the Socialists voted for either Roosevelt or Wilson.

1913—Vote cast for Court of Appeals	
Judges .....	32,734 (5.1% of total)
1914—Vote cast for Governor .....	25,373 (4.1% of total)

## SOCIALISTS FOR SULZER

This year was enlivened by the campaign of William Sulzer for Governor on the American ticket, after his impeachment. An analysis of the figures of the different districts shows a remarkable gain of socialist votes by Sulzer and which accounts for the decline in the Socialist strength.

1915—Vote cast for Local Officials....	42,527 (7% of total)
1916—Vote cast for Governor .....	40,635 (5.7% of total)

This was the Wilson year, and it was generally conceded that large numbers of Socialists broke away from their party to support Mr. Wilson and Judge Seabury for Governor, both regarded as radicals.

1917—Vote cast for Mayor ..... 144,135 (28% of total)

This vote was cast for Mr. Hillquitt as a protest against the war, and attracted large numbers of voters who had never before cast their ballots for a Socialist.

1918—Vote for Governor..... 86,384 (9% of total)

This vote, for the first time, includes that cast by the women and shows a decided gain over the last Gubernatorial record of the party.

This record indicates how the vote of the party has steadily increased in New York, accompanied by a like increase throughout the nation. The party's growth was not apparent to the American people until the Great War and its upheavals throughout the world brought to the attention of Americans the startling fact that an organized political party waged a contest every year based on bitter opposition to our form of government.

#### SOCIALISM'S ADVANCE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Socialism's advance here has been no more phenomenal than in other countries. In a recent address delivered by Mr. Ed. C. Miller, a member of our Club, he quoted from the American Labor Year Book for 1916-17, showing that in 1892 the Socialists of Italy were able to elect six representatives to the Italian Parliament, while in 1913, a year before the outbreak of the war, they had elected 59 representatives. In Sweden in 1902 the party elected 4 representatives, while in 1914 the number had grown to 87. In France in 1893, 40 Deputies were elected to the French House of Deputies, while in 1917 the party had elected 166. In Great Britain the movement has spread, although not to as large an extent as in some other countries, and in 1916 Parliament had 35 Socialist Representatives. Australia in 1901 elected 24 Representatives and in 1914, 71. In Germany, the birthplace of Socialism, the party in 1871 elected two representatives, while in 1912, 110 were elected on an apportionment

The unofficial police returns for the election held November 4, 1918 show the vote for Central Socialist candidate for President of Board of Aldermen as 126,305—about 12.5% of total vote cast.

The unofficial police returns for the election held November 4, 1919, show the city vote for O'Neal, Socialist candidate for President of Board of Aldermen, as 126,365—about 13.5% of total vote cast.

frankly confessed by the authorities to have been made by the nobility and Junkers to keep down Socialist representation.

#### THE VARIOUS FACTIONS OF SOCIALISTS

The term Socialist has been generally applied to the believers in the doctrines of the early founders of this school of thought, including St. Simon, Robert Owen of England, Karl Marx, Ferdinand La Salle, Frederick Engels and others. They have also been known as communists, a name just now accepted by the faction that at the Chicago Convention of September 1st, 1919, broke away from the Social Democratic party. Extreme radicals in this country some years ago organized the Industrial Workers of the World, generally known as the I. W. W.

The collapse of Russia after the downfall of the Czar witnessed the complete control of that country by the Socialist movement, and after the elimination of the Kerensky government the extreme radical Socialists of Russia secured power and called themselves Bolsheviks, a Russian term, now accepted as meaning that they were in the majority. This term has now become synonymous all over the world with extreme radicalism. The fact is, however, that Bolshevism is really another name for radical Socialism, and is patterned on the program originally advanced by the I. W. W. of America, and is practically the scheme of government outlined by the leaders of Socialism for the past fifty years, based on the rule of the so-called proletariat.

In this country the war divided the Socialist party into two groups, one being made up of those who remained loyal to the country's interests and the other consisting of the larger number who, adopting the St. Louis platform, denounced the war, conscription and every phase of activity by the nation in its time of stress. The result of this schism in the party is now seen in the division into two factions, one known as the "Left Wingers" or radicals and the other as the "Right Wingers" or moderates. It is too early to say which faction holds the larger number of followers at the present time, the recent primary election indicating a mixed result.



### SOME OF THE AIMS OF SOCIALISTS

Socialism in this city, as everywhere else, has been and is a struggle for recognition of and control by the workers. Its advocates openly boast that the movement has but one object in view, the elimination of the private ownership of property and the absolute control of the government by the working classes, its plea being made to the working element of the world. It recognizes no distinction as to race, religion or nationalism born of patriotic love. It broadly asserts all men and women are equal, that the great religious teachers, including Christ, so preached, and that the object of the new faith is to have the working class attain what is called real equality, possible only by the taking over of all wealth and all wealth-producing agencies, which the party leaders contend, will simply give back to the creators of wealth that which should never have been taken away from them.

Until we plunged into the Great War leaders of public opinion, in our political parties and in our press, gave little thought to the Socialist propaganda and very little effort was made to counteract the work done every day in the year by the active leaders of the propaganda. American indifference was largely due, no doubt, to the knowledge that our country had always been a land of opportunity; that the poor man of today is apt to be the rich man of tomorrow, and that the doctrine of class consciousness is repugnant to the in-born American love of a square deal, the average American generally feeling that all good things of life are to be attained by effort, endeavor and sacrifice. This probably accounts for the failure of the Socialist party since its beginning to attract any large number of Americans as followers.

In this city, as throughout the country, most of the followers of Socialism have come from the foreign element, who have brought with them from abroad the sense of inequality that governed their lives before they emigrated, and bitter recollection of the tyranny of the governments they left. John Spargo, a leading Socialist writer, in the September "McClure's," writes that on a recent lecture tour devoted to a discussion of Bolshevism the great majority of his hearers were foreigners. It is with this element that the radical leaders have had their

greatest success, continually preaching that the wealth acquired by our captains of industry has been stolen from the workers and during the recent war attacking the Government as having been bought up by the capitalist class so that their wealth could be saved, and charging that the Government officials who advocated conscription were murderers.

### LABOR UNION PROPAGANDA

The great success achieved by the Socialist party in recent years, as shown by the voting figures, is due entirely to the economic changes brought on by the war and which have affected the lives of all our people, particularly the foreign-born poor. This success, however, is the result of systematized indefatigable propaganda done by the party for thirty years. Their chief efforts during all these years were directed to the labor unions, and while the American trained labor union man has been bitterly opposed to making the labor union movement a tail to the Socialist kite, Socialist agitators met with great success inculcating their doctrines in the minds of many of the labor leaders who confess that the Socialist viewpoint is acceptable to them although they are not favorable to the Socialist party as a political scheme. This has recently been illustrated by the attitude of leading men of the Federation of Labor in their advocacy of the Plumb railroad plan.

Socialism's power in the labor movement has been with the non-English speaking labor unions. Many of the foreign laborers and artisans found on their arrival here that they were not acceptable as members of labor unions. The difference in language and training was responsible for the feeling against them, and the failure of the American labor unions to encourage membership in their unions of their foreign fellow-workers was the main cause for the Socialist movement's growth up to the beginning of the war. Had these foreigners come in contact with the American labor union leaders they would have been affected by an American political environment which has always been unfavorable to the Socialist propaganda. To attract the foreign element the Socialist leaders have made affiliation with the movement a matter of linguistic, national and even religious pride, notwithstanding their doctrine of internationalism.

Every strike is advertised extensively as a movement for the uplift of the working class. Every disorder attending a strike requiring police or military attention is made use of by the propagandists to bring home to the striking workers the idea that our government is in alliance with the capitalist cause, most of their followers having a very vague idea as to the powers of the local, State and National Governments.

The unions in control of the Socialist element have always been conducted on the theory that the more discontent that could be created between employee and employer the more successful would be the political end of the propaganda. In recent years almost every strike waged by these unions has been made a part of political agitation, the idea of the leaders being that any injury that might accrue to the employing classes, who are always "dubbed" capitalists—although in some cases the employees are better off financially than are their employers—is to be regarded with complacency, the main thought being that every strike is a means of impressing upon the workers the class consciousness which the leaders claim is the most important object to be achieved in their purpose of bringing about a change in our government.

The control of these unions serves another useful purpose, "a voluntary tax" being imposed on the members for the purpose of raising campaign funds. The shop stewards and union representatives make it their business to urge men in the shops they control to "voluntarily" contribute to the cause. It is estimated that the bulk of the funds raised for the Hillquit, Meyer London and other campaigns came through such form of taxation.

#### NEWSPAPER AND PERIODICAL PROPAGANDA

The Socialist control of newspapers in this city, particularly those printed in foreign languages, has been of tremendous benefit to their cause. These newspapers, especially the "Jewish Daily Forward," with a daily circulation of 125,000, and the English "Call" were started in business originally by contributions received mainly from the labor unions. In addition to such contributions, picnics, excursions and balls have frequently been conducted, the proceeds of which have been turned over

to such newspapers to buy plants and to establish them on a firm financial footing. A very interesting feature of their newspapers is that all of them absolutely refuse to publish any advertisement or news matter which may oppose any point of view advocated by the Socialist party. No amount of money can buy space in any of their newspapers to state a case in opposition to the Socialist party or any of its candidates.

No more dangerous weapon is in their power than these newspapers. Excepting the "Call" and a few unimportant periodicals, all of them in this city are printed in foreign languages and read by people who cannot read any English newspapers, and whose point of view from the time they land in this country is fashioned entirely by the material printed in these sheets. It can readily be understood that the immigrant, unable to talk or read our language, kept away from English speaking labor unions and reading these newspapers, becomes easy prey to these agitators, and the sense of injustice brought with him from abroad becomes a powerful irritant of which advantage is taken by all Socialist propagandists. Thus the immigrant who ought to become a most valuable asset to our country is changed into a dangerous liability, and in no place is this more clearly illustrated than in the City of New York.

The Socialist success among the foreign born is clearly indicated by the voting strength of the movement in the foreign sections of the city. This applies to every year's record. The vote in the English speaking portions of the city is comparatively small. Even in 1917, when Hillquit, the Socialist candidate for mayor on a platform of opposition to war, received the largest Socialist vote ever cast in this city, an analysis shows that the districts that were not clearly foreign born gave him a small vote.

#### PARLOR SOCIALISTS AND SOCIAL UPLIFTERS

Socialism's headway among the foreigners in this city, as elsewhere, can be charged in large measure to the failure of Americans to offset their propaganda work. Indeed, strange as it may seem, Americans frequently have unconsciously been most valuable aids to these propagandists. The so-called parlor socialists are generally American born or American trained and

usually are individuals of financial and social prestige governed by the sentimental and laudable desire of overcoming the "injustice to the working classes." Their numerical power has been slight, but their financial and moral influence has been tremendous. The settlement houses, social and community centers in the City of New York have very frequently become breeding places for the Socialist party. Very many of the workers in these centers openly avow their belief in the doctrines of Socialism, and the great majority of these workers have not hesitated to preach and teach these doctrines to the young people who come within their sphere of activities.

Not alone by the open advocacy of the socialist doctrines have they helped, but they have been prime movers together with Socialist party leaders in all so-called uplift movements having for their object reduction in the price of food and rents, better housing facilities and remedying various other social problems which are apparently innocent and praiseworthy efforts to ameliorate the condition of the toilers of the tenements. Such meetings are invariably used for propaganda purposes by the Socialist party leaders. A meeting called for the purpose of rent reduction or food price improvement presents a splendid chance for real service to the sentimental social worker, but to the Socialist political agitator it serves as a glorious opportunity to abuse the capitalists and to attack our system of government as responsible for the conditions the meeting is called to correct. The agitator usually succeeds in bringing home to the men, women and children who attend such gatherings that the only way to correct their troubles is to support the Socialist party. Very clever methods of camouflage are employed so as to avoid charges of political activity against the movers of such meetings. To cite one instance will furnish an illustration of how cleverly this work is done. In the Congressional campaign last year on the lower East Side of Manhattan the Democratic and Republican parties united on Judge Goldfogle to insure the defeat of Meyer London, the Socialist Congressman. At the height of the campaign a large sign was placed in front of the Educational Alliance announcing the holding of a Liberty Loan meeting, with Meyer London and other Socialist leaders as speakers, all of whom had opposed the war, conscrip-

tion, previous loans, and all of whom were campaigning in favor of the candidate who refused to say openly that he disagreed with the St. Louis platform of the Socialist party which condemned the war. Judge Goldfogle and other representative men of the East Side were never invited to address this meeting. The purpose of it was to impress the patriotic element of the neighborhood with the idea that the Socialists of that section were also patriotic and loyal. This auditorium is never rented for political meetings, this being forbidden by the rules of the Alliance, so that the patriotic purpose of the gathering was emphasized by holding it there. The Alliance is only half a block from the building of the "Jewish Forward," the great Socialist daily, which building includes a large auditorium in which all Socialist and labor gatherings for the neighborhood are held. It should be remembered that this meeting was held during a period when both great parties had agreed to refrain from political work, so as not to interfere with the Liberty Loan drive, and the Socialist speakers had not attended a single patriotic block party meeting, scores of which were held throughout that period.

No doubt many of the good people of our churches and synagogues who contribute liberally to the maintenance of social and settlement centers are justified in claiming that they are opposed to Socialism, and do nothing to encourage its teachers and agitators, but the institutions they maintain have been of tremendous advantage to the work of spreading the teachings of Socialism. Inquiry of the leaders of the political parties in the tenement districts of New York, where these social centers thrive, will bring out valuable information as to the services rendered in recent years to the Socialist cause by these centers.

#### SOCIALIST SUNDAY SCHOOLS

The difficulty encountered by Socialist leaders in converting Americans has led to the organization of Socialist Sunday Schools for the economic training of children. These schools are maintained in the City of New York on a large scale and their main object is to inculcate in the minds of the young the class consciousness which is the underlying feature of the party program. The knowledge that the public school instills in the minds of the young a love of flag and country which is most

difficult to overcome in mature years has led to the organization of these schools. They are largely attended by the children of enthusiastic followers. It is too early to say now what effect such schooling will have, but indications in recent years show that this schooling is producing quite a number of radical leaders and the frequent outbreaks of Socialistic sentiment in our colleges and high schools is no doubt one of the results of this new method of propaganda work.

### POLITICAL CAMPAIGN METHODS

In recent years the Socialist leaders in New York have changed their policy of conducting political campaigns. Before the war their method was to preach their doctrine and to depend upon the mental conversion of those to whom they appealed. The great war and its tremendous problems, the Government's course as to conscription of young men, and the economic stress that affected such large numbers of the working class brought about a change in political methods. The campaigns for Meyer London for Congress and for Mr. Hillquit for Mayor were waged on lines calculated to induce Republicans and Democrats to vote for these candidates even though the voters did not believe in the tenets of Socialism and this course has been followed ever since by the party candidates for Assembly, Board of Aldermen, and last year for the State ticket, the governing idea of the party leaders being to capitalize for the benefit of their movement all dissatisfaction with existing conditions.

In order to meet with success, particularly in the sections where the movement has its largest following, the Socialist leaders resorted to drastic methods in recent campaigns. They packed halls during the meetings of their political opponents with organized claque instructed to "heckle" all speakers and, if possible, to break up the meetings. In 1917 Mayor Mitchel was refused a hearing at many of the meetings held by his friends in Socialist strongholds, the Mayor being hissed off the stage at one meeting. Street corner meetings of the Democrats and Republicans have been turned into riots by organized gangs of Socialists, many of whom were aliens. In these sections the store keepers and tradesmen who did not openly avow their sympathy with the Socialist cause and candidates were placed on a

boycott list, a house-to-house canvass of the neighborhood being made to impress the residents with the importance of standing by the proletariat in the contest against the capitalists. Labor union members who had the courage to declare their opposition to Socialist candidates were told that they would lose their union cards, which meant the loss of employment. New York political history tells many stories of tyranny practised by political leaders, but never did any group of party enthusiasts attempt the desperate tactics employed by the Socialist advocates in the campaigns of 1914, 1916, 1917 and 1918. To compel a storekeeper to remove every sign and poster not Socialistic upon the threat of a boycott to ruin him financially was not the exception, but the settled policy in every section of the greater city where the leaders felt strong enough to accomplish their purpose. Taking advantage of their Sunday schools, their children were organized to parade, to preach Socialism to their playmates in public school, and those who expressed opposition to the Socialist cause were made the objects of ridicule and abuse.

### "TENANTS' LEAGUES"

In the past two years a new method of agitation has been frequently employed in the tenement districts. Tenants have been organized by the Socialists into so-called "Tenants' Leagues" to oppose any increase of rents made by the landlords and to unite on demands for various so-called improvements in the houses they occupy. While profiteers among landlords have, no doubt, taken advantage of existing conditions in the real estate world, the great majority of owners of tenements have tried to be fair and just to the tenants. Many of these owners have invested their hard earned savings in these tenements and have carried them through the period of depression following the panic of 1907, losing money during all the years, until the war conditions changed the real estate situation. Under the leadership of the Socialist agitators these tenement dwellers have not alone refused to pay increased rents, but have deliberately taken the stand that they would permit no other tenants to pay if they could prevent it, and if evicted would make every effort to prevent others from occupying their premises. Thus we see the result of a policy of Socialistic agitation which required that

demand after demand be made on the employers of the tenants for increased pay and reduced hours of labor, while urging them to refuse to pay any increased rent to the owners of the buildings in which they lived. This, in the language of their leaders, was a splendid method of "striking a deadly blow at the system of capitalism."

#### SOME REASONS FOR SOCIALISM'S SPREAD

The treatment accorded our foreign born plays a most important part in Socialist propaganda. The ridicule, contempt and scorn evinced against the foreigner in courts, public departments, and by many public officials help to drive many of these people to the camp of the Socialist agitators.

The very poor types of public officials in our large cities, particularly in New York, make a decided impression on our foreign element. In their native countries public officials are held in great respect, nearly all of them being men of standing in their communities and generally men of education and culture. Socialist agitators take great delight in holding up to ridicule the grade of men appointed and elected to public office in this country. Most of these agitators being foreign born, realize that the high ideals of the foreign born have been shattered after they have learned that ignorant and uncouth men can reach high public position.

An inefficient administration of the city with a poorly governed police department and the appointment of unfit magistrates is responsible for grave injustice in many cases to this element of our population. For instance, a trifling matter like the arrest of a pushcart peddler, although he carries on his vocation because of a license issued by the authorities, and which is followed by the loss of his stock of goods representing the investment of his last penny, and then punished by a fine of \$5 or \$10, which generally means imprisonment while a family at home is starving, is a powerful argument in a tenement district against the Government, most of the residents feeling that Washington is just as responsible for the condition as is the City Hall.

It is unnecessary in this report to refer to the influence of great wealth on our public life and to the effect produced by the

lavish display so generally made by our wealthy class, but it should be emphasized that these are causes that produce fertile fields from which the Socialists gather large crops.

This committee is not charged with the task of recommending a method of procedure to combat Socialism and its offshoots; yet we feel that the time has come when this menace to our institutions must be met without fear and we feel that our great party must begin the work, and begin immediately, so that its best thought may be devoted to devise ways and means to counteract the pernicious agitation to which we have called attention.

The grave economic, social and political problems that now confront our beloved country need for their solution the best thought and united effort of all patriotic, God-fearing Americans. Unfortunately, we must confess that grave abuses have arisen in our country which demand correction. These conditions effect all our people, but particularly the poor, the large foreign element of this class probably being the chief sufferers.

#### SOCIALISM A CHALLENGE TO OUR CIVILIZATION

Our civilization since the beginning of history has accepted the Biblical conception of justice. The Constitution of our land, regarded as the most wonderful state paper ever drafted, provides for impartial justice to all, rich and poor alike. Socialism in its fundamentals, its appeals to establish class consciousness and government by a class is a challenge to the ideals of justice accepted by civilized society. It deliberately disregards the Divine command as expressed in Exodus (verses 2 and 3, chapter XXIII): "Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause," and as later emphasized in Leviticus (verse 15, chapter XIX): "Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor know the person of the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor."

Either Socialism and its offspring Bolshevism are sound or unsound. We believe them to be unsound economically, and dangerous to our form of government, for the fathers of the Republic never contemplated a time when the Republic would be ruled by a class, even though that class consisted of the poor, now called the proletariat.

## THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND SOCIALISM

If the doctrines of Socialism are unsound, our great party owes it to the country to oppose these doctrines with might and main. Unfortunately, in our city our party management has ignored the Socialist agitation since it began, thirty years ago. In the very localities where the movement is now strongest the Republican organization has been weakest. The failure all these years to aid and to encourage the Republicans in such territory has resulted in a steady decline of Republican voting strength, but, what is much worse, in a loss of party workers of intelligence and influence who could have combatted the propaganda. Indeed, the very rules of the party organization have tended to hasten the disintegration of the Republican organizations in some districts. These rules have deprived the tenement district Republican organizations and the leaders of them of influence as compared with the power wielded by the few so-called Republican districts all of which are populated by the wealthy and well-to-do and which point is used with deadly effect in the poorer districts. Just now, when a virile and powerful organization is most needed, not alone to advocate Republican doctrine but to preach patriotism—Americanism—we have no workers and no machinery worthy of the name with which to do it. If the Republican party is to offset the charge that it is a capitalist party; that it is opposed to the working man and his welfare; that it stands for privilege, it must begin to do proper propaganda work not alone during campaigns, but during the entire year, just as the Socialists have been doing. To do so requires thought, energy, money and men of influence, particularly among the great foreign class of voters.

In this report we do not propose to recommend legislation to solve the problems confronting the people. We leave that to the party leaders who assemble in conventions, National and State, and decide on programs that they believe are for the best interests for all the people. We do, however, strongly urge that our party representatives ever bear in mind the duties we owe to the so-called proletariat. Failure of our leaders in party control or in legislative halls to properly heed the righteous demands of our tenement toilers spells doom for our party in this great city, which may mean doom in the State and in the Nation.

## THE JEWISH PEOPLE AND SOCIALISM

The part played by men and women of Jewish blood in the spread of Socialism and Bolshevism throughout the world has attracted wide attention. According to some newspaper accounts, every Bolshevik in Russia is a Jew or every Jew is a Bolshevik. In our own country the activity of people of Jewish blood in the spread of Socialism has caused comment among all classes. One of the peculiarities of Socialism is that its chief exponents are atheists and have broken away from all religious ties, and this fact alone puts the great mass of Jews in opposition to the movement, for belief in one God is as Jewish today as it was when proclaimed by them at Sinai. Trotsky in Russia, while of Jewish blood, long ago disowned his people and his faith. Practically all the other leaders throughout the world who were born Jews are of his type. Lenine in Russia and the great majority of the Socialist-Bolshevik leaders, however, are people of Christian birth.

## RESULTS OF HOUNDING THROUGH THE CENTURIES

To understand the reasons for the interest of some Jews, particularly, Russians, in the Socialist movement it is necessary to understand the conditions of Jewish life in that country, in Germany and Austria, and which date back centuries ago to Poland before its dismemberment and to the old Russian Empire, which now includes the territory of new Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, as well as Rumania and Austria. All these countries have a record of centuries of indescribable misery for their Jewish residents and of persecution unparalleled in the annals of any race since the beginning of recorded history. The nobility of Poland of old succeeded in completely subjugating these people, a policy continued in later years by the royalty and bureaucracy of Russia and Rumania. Trade, manufacturing, farming and the professions were barred to the vast majority because of fear of competition. Secular education of Jews was restricted to a very limited number, never exceeding 3 per cent. of the total Jewish population, and who mainly came from the wealthy. A comparatively small number of Jews were permitted to become tax collectors, usurers, distillers and liquor dealers, and these were generally required to divide their gains

with those who gave them authority. This resulted in the growth of the power and influence of a limited number of Jews because of their relations with the reigning rulers and the wealth that they were able to accumulate, but it brought misery and suffering to the great mass of their co-religionists because of the envy and jealousy created among the ignorant peasantry and tradesmen, who held all the Jews responsible for the conditions created through the favor shown a small number by their noblemen and rulers.

Of course all Jews were denied political and civil rights. Religious intolerance accompanied by persecution was the general rule. Centuries of these conditions produced a poverty of the Jewish masses beyond description and resulted in political and social inequalities which brought on a feeling of intense bitterness against all the governing classes and antagonism to the limited number of wealthy men among them. This bitterness against their own wealthy was even carried within the portals of the synagogues.

Conditions began to improve slightly after the middle of the nineteenth century. From the limited number of those able to receive a secular education there arose leaders who began to urge emigration of their brethren to other lands so as to escape the suffering that was their lot. This emigration was hastened by massacres of dreadful proportions called pogroms. At about this time Socialism began to make headway throughout Europe. The doctrine of equality, brotherhood, industrial and political freedom appealed with tremendous force to these people, particularly the leaders. Here at last was a program which would recognize them and their people as human beings, giving to them the same political and industrial opportunities, even in Russia, if successful, as were possessed by their neighbors of Christian faith. It not alone appealed to the limited number of educated leaders, but it impressed the minds of the ignorant masses as the only panacea for their sorrows.

#### AMERICAN CONDITIONS

Those who emigrated to America suffered from discrimination and ill will due to their foreign appearance and ignorance of the language of the country. In the first years of their im-

migration in the '80s and '90s existing labor unions were barred to them, so that they were encouraged to organize unions of their own, made up exclusively of non-English speaking Jews. Employment was and still is frequently denied them because of their race and faith. These conditions made them easily susceptible to their own leaders' pleas, who preached to them in their own tongue that the success of Socialism meant equal opportunity in the labor world and in the social and political life of the country.

Socialism as preached to them meant justice and brotherhood, just as their prophets of old had preached, and which still influences their lives, for brotherhood and justice and belief in God are the fundamentals of Judaism. Socialism is the cry of anguish and despair of the Jewish soul, born of centuries of persecution and misery.

A remarkable feature in New York is that the children of these people, trained in our public schools, reject the teachings of Socialism and are absorbed by the great political parties. The establishment of Socialist Sunday Schools among them is the best tribute that has been paid to the Americanization work done by public spirited American Jews, aided by the public school system.

The Jew in America once he appreciates the blessings of liberty and the meaning of our Constitution, will not accept a doctrine of class rule or internationalism, which is contrary to his age-long conception of brotherhood of rich and poor alike and of Nationalism for which his people have given some of the world's greatest martyrs and warriors. Nor will he ever be disloyal to the one country that led the world in setting the example of extending religious and political freedom to him.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH LEVENSON, Chairman,  
ELMER E. COOLEY,  
CHARLES PARK.

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**END OF  
TITLE**